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20,000 Due Here Saturday In War Protest

Massive Picketing Of White House Set Over Viet Nam

By ORR KELLY
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An estimated 20,000 persons are expected to gather here Saturday for what, from all indications, will be a peaceful March on Washington to protest U.S. policy in Viet Nam.

Sanford Gottlieb, the coordinator of the March for SANE (National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy), told a press conference yesterday there had been a marked increase in interest in the march since the revelation last week that the United States had declined to negotiate with the North Vietnamese last year.

For that reason, he said, he is just not sure how many people will show up for the march, which will include a massive picketing of the White House and a program at the Sylvan Theater on the Washington Monument grounds.

To Meet Officials

At 10:30 a.m. Saturday, he said, he and six other leaders of the March will meet at the White House with Chester Cooper, assistant to McGeorge Bundy, the President's adviser on foreign policy, and either Lee White or Harry McPherson, two top White House aides.

The picketing is scheduled to begin at 11 a.m., with the places of honor in front of the White House reserved for veterans (who have been advised to wear their overseas caps and ribbons).

Other marchers will be assigned to march in long, narrow ovals along the sidewalks. "As more people arrive," Gottlieb said, "they will move down onto 15th and 17th Streets, then onto E Street south of the White House and, if there are that many, onto Constitution Avenue."

Bus Drivers Balk

The protesters were facing transportation difficulties. According to the Associated Press, union drivers for New Jersey's largest bus company, Public Service Coordinated Transport, have refused to drive demonstrators to Washington Saturday.

The firm's president, Herbert Harper, announced the drivers' decision, which appeared to have been spontaneous. A union local president of the Amalgamated Transit Workers, AFL-CIO, indicated that one reason was the danger of rock throwing by those opposed to the peace demonstrators.

Another company, A-1 Coach Tours Inc., reported it will provide 50 or 60 buses to carry some 3,000 demonstrators to Washington. About 10,000 are expected to go to Washington from the New York area one way or another.

The drivers' refusal drew a denunciation from Prof. David Frost of Rutgers University, a leader of SANE in New Jersey. He said SANE planned to put the case before the State Utility Commission, or perhaps seek direct court intervention.

Nearly 600 police, under the direction of Chief John B. Layton and Deputy Edward Covell, will be assigned—many of them on overtime—to patrol the picketing, direct traffic, guard the Potomac bridges and take care of lost children.

The organizers of the march, who began their work in August, issued a "Call to Mobilize the Conscience of America" to work toward a ceasefire in Viet Nam, a halt to the bombing of North Viet Nam, support for the principles of the 1954 Geneva Accords, and acceptance of negotiations "with all concerned parties including the Viet Cong."

To Watch Signs

To try to sharpen the focus of the demonstration, Gottlieb's office issued a green sheet of paper with 14 authorized slogans to be carried on picket signs.

In answer to a question, Gottlieb said they would object to signs which said, for example, such things as: "Impeach Lyndon Johnson" or "Bring the GIs Home Now."

The police, he said, were asked to help exclude those who might show up with inappropriate signs. But he was told, he added, that it was up to the march organizers to make such distinctions.

Counter-demonstrators—the American Nazi Party, for example—will be segregated by the police, Gottlieb said.

To police their own demonstration, he said, the march organizers have arranged to have 300 monitors with yellow arm bands.

"Authorized" signs will be issued to marchers, Gottlieb said. If someone shows up with an "unauthorized" placard, reflecting a slight difference of attitude toward the Viet Nam war, he will be asked by the monitors to remove the sign. However, if he refuses, he will be allowed to march anyway, Gottlieb said.

The likeliest source of picketers whose signs will not fit in is the delegates to a four-day convention sponsored by the National Co-ordinating Committee to End the War in Viet Nam—made up of organizations of the "new left" who consider the SANE people almost hopelessly rightist.

But a spokesman for that group, which will be meeting at the Lincoln Memorial Church, 11th and R Streets, NW, said she knew of no plans to try to disrupt the march. The convention will recess on Saturday, however, so that anyone who wants to take part in the march will have a chance to do so.

Speeches Start at 2 P.M.

The picketers are expected to leave the White House about 1 p.m. and move down 15th and 17th Streets toward the Monument Grounds. Entertainment by puppeteers and folk singers will be provided until the formal program begins about 2 p.m.

Among those scheduled to speak are Mrs. Martin Luther King Jr., Rep. George Brown Jr., D-Calif., Dr. Edwin Dahlberg, minister in residence at Crozier Theological Seminary, Prof. Joseph Duffy of Notre Dame University, Dr. Benjamin Spock and Norman Thomas.

President Johnson, who has asked the delegates to pray on Sunday for peace in Viet Nam, is expected to spend the week end at his ranch in Texas.